

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 476
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 4292

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GR, YO, MPOL
SUB: YUGOSLAV ARMY CHIEF VISITS ATHENS

REF: 76 ATHENS 10970 (DTG 121723Z OCT 76)

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED SUMMARY: YUGOSLAV ARMY CHIEF AND ARMED FORCES DEPUTY CHIEF, COLONEL GENERAL PEKIC, VISITED GREECE APRIL 25-MAY 1 AS AN OFFICIAL GUEST OF HIS GREEK COUNTERPART, LT. GENERAL AGAMMENON GRATSIOS. DURING HIS VISIT, PEKIC WAS DECORATED BY DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF, MET WITH RANKING OFFICERS OF ALL THREE GREEK MILITARY SERVICES AND WITNESSED VARIOUS TRAINING EXERCISES. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE VISIT OPENED WITH THE REQUIRED WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY AT THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER AND WAS FOLLOWED BY A SERIES OF PROTOCOL CALLS ON THE RANKING GREEK MILITARY OFFICIALS. AVEROFF AWARDED PEKIC THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX WHICH THE GREEK DEFENSE MINISTER SAID EMPHASIZED THE CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND YUGOSLAVIA, AND THE CLOSE COOPERATION WHICH EACH SIDE WISHED TO CONTINUE. SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES AT THE GREEK PENTA-

GON AND ELSEWHERE WERE SAID TO HAVE CENTERED ON "BILATERAL DEFENSE MATTERS."

3. THE SCHEDULE FOR GENERAL PEKIC INCLUDED A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES. HE WAS TAKEN TO THE NAVAL TRAINING HEADQUARTERS AT SKARAMANGA WHERE HE WAS BRIEFED AND WATCHED A DISPLAY BY FROGMEN. LATER AT TANAGRA, HIS GREEK HOSTS SHOWED HIM THE BASE, EXPLAINING ITS MISSION AND MODE OF OPERATION. HE LIKEWISE WENT TO THE FLIGHT SIMULATOR SECTION, SAW A STATIC DEMONSTRATION OF MIRAGE AND F-104 AIRCRAFT, AND WATCHED SOME MIRAGE AIRCRAFT STAGE TAKEOFFS. BEFORE RETURNING TO BELGRADE, THE YUGOSLAV GENERAL CALLED ON THIRD ARMY CORPS COMMANDER KRITIKOS AND WENT TO THE TRAINING CENTER AT RENDINA IN NORTHERN GREECE. END UNCLASSIFIED

4. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: THIS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN PART OF A SERIES OF EXCHANGE VISITS BETWEEN GREEK-YUGOSLAV MILITARY

LEADERS. FOR EXAMPLE, DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF VISITED YUGOSLAVIA LAST YEAR ACCOMPANIED BY THE THEN DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE GREEK ARMY, GENERAL KARAYANNIS (REFTEL). GREEK ARMY CHIEF GRATSIOS TOLD THE ARMA THE OTHER DAY THAT ALTHOUGH THE PEKIC VISIT WAS ESSENTIALLY OF A PROTOCOL NATURE, WHAT IMPRESSED THE GREEK SIDE MOST WAS THAT ALL THE YUGOSLAV MILITARY SEEM GENUINELY UNITED ON THE ISSUE OF FIRMLY OPPOSING ANY OUTSIDE PRESSURES DESIGNED TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN THEIR COUNTRY AFTER TITO LEAVES THE SCENE.
KUBISCH

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